

Memo prepared for [redacted] in response to request, via

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[redacted] for comment

on Sen. Keating's remarks re military buildup in Cuba

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[redacted] came with story that Keating had said they were 10 times stronger now than in November -- actually he said stronger than last July (st !!)

Also attached are some press reports quoting Keating & Morse -- and the Tad Szulc story --

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CODE WORD MATERIAL

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24 January 1963

MEMORANDUM

**SUBJECT: Statements of Senators Keating and Morse re
Military Buildup in Cuba**

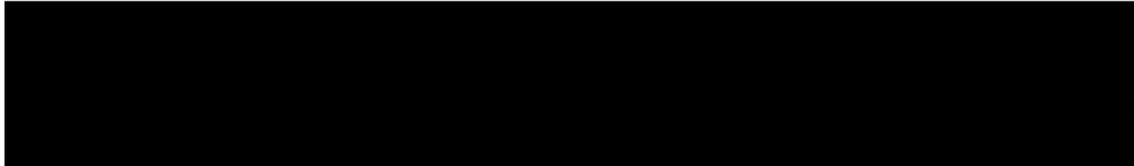
1. Senator Keating is quoted in the press as stating that a new intensive military buildup is under way in Cuba, that Soviet military equipment has been pouring into Cuba, and "they now are ten times stronger than they were on July 1 last year". Senator Morse, referring to press reports that large Soviet shipments of weapons are continuing to arrive in Cuba, ordered an immediate Senate inquiry into the reports.

2. The references to a big new military buildup are not accurate. The intensive phase of the Soviet military buildup in Cuba began in late July 1962. Between then and the imposition of the US quarantine on 24 October 1962 large quantities of Soviet weapons were introduced into Cuba, including the strategic missiles and the IL-28 jet bombers. During this time an estimated 23,000 Soviet military personnel arrived in Cuba. Prior to this there had been only some 500 Soviet and satellite military personnel in Cuba, most of them technicians and trainers.

3. Since late October, the strategic missiles, the IL-28 bombers, and some 5,000 Soviet military personnel have left Cuba. Still remaining on the island is much of the equipment introduced since late July, including 24 SAM sites, equipment for at least four coastal-defense cruise-missile sites, twelve missile-equipped patrol boats, 42 MIG-21Cs, and large quantities of other weapons. Much of this remains under Soviet control. In addition, there are four Soviet armored combat groups still based in Cuba. Only a small portion of the equipment for these Soviet units is believed to have been shipped back to the USSR. It is estimated that roughly 17,000 Soviet military personnel of all types remain in Cuba.

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4. Exhaustive surveillance of all the more than sixty Soviet and satellite vessels arriving in Cuba since the lifting of the US quarantine on 20 November establishes beyond a reasonable doubt that there has been only one shipment of military equipment to Cuba since that date. This shipment, [redacted]

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[redacted] probably was military, but its exact nature cannot be determined from information now available. The possibility that relatively small military shipments arrived on other Soviet vessels loaded mainly with civil cargoes cannot be excluded.

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Soviet Build-Up Of Defense Arms in Cuba

By RAB SZULC

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22—Soviet forces in Cuba were reported to be working round-the-clock on the construction and improvement of highly sophisticated ground and air defenses for the island. Private reports from Havana, confirmed in part by American experts on the Cuban situation, say that large shipments of weapons and other materials are continuing to arrive in Cuba.

Soviet encampments are being relocated and strengthened, and Soviet experts are directing Cubans in the construction of underground depots, hangars and barracks.

The construction work is especially concentrated in the main defense complex between Havana and the San Antonio de Los Bancos air base in Camaguey province and in the Sierra Maestra area of Oriente Province.

Hold Defensive Weapons'

According to the private reports, some construction sites are entirely closed even to Cuban military personnel and work at these sites is performed exclusively by Soviet troops.

So far as can be determined, the military equipment still entering Cuba and the military work being carried out on the island fit into the category of "defensive weapons."

Under the October agreement between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev, the Soviet Union removed from Cuba its long-range nuclear missiles and its IL-28 jet bombers. These weapons were characterized as "offensive" by Mr. Kennedy.

The steady flow of reports on the expansion of the Soviet military establishment in Cuba has been a cause of growing concern to the Kennedy Administration in the months following the missiles crisis. But, at least for the time being, the administration does not regard this build-up as an immediate danger to the United States or

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SOVIET BUILD-UP IN CUBA

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to other countries of the Western Hemisphere.

The new reports on a mounting Soviet military effort in Cuba coincided with a decision today by Senate Republicans to open their own investigation into the abortive 1961 rebel invasion at Cuba's Bay of Pigs.

The investigation was ordered by the Senate Republican Policy Committee. Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen of Illinois, minority leader in the Senate, said that the results of the inquiry may be presented to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Air Support Studied

Commenting on a recent statement by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy that United States air support had never been promised to the rebels—a point of rising controversy—Mr. Dirksen said: "This is a matter of such importance that it cannot be left in doubt so far as the facts are concerned."

The pattern of Soviet military activity in Cuba since the missiles crisis last October and November has involved the extensive bolstering of Cuban defenses in the field of conventional arms. But there has been a special emphasis on highly sophisticated weaponry.

During the missiles crisis, the Russians were estimated to have 15,200 men in Cuba. According to the private Havana reports, about 3,300 men have been withdrawn. But the reports noted that some replacements had been sent in and calculated present Soviet strength in Cuba at more than 12,000 men.

It is assumed that the Russians who left were the specialists attached to the intermediate and medium-range missile sites that were dismantled last fall.

The men who remain are said to be technicians in ground-to-air guided missiles and coastal artillery guided missiles; aviation specialists helping to operate the Cuban jet air force with its 150 MIG's; engineer and ordnance experts; and members of the combat units that presumably guard Soviet equipment and camps.

The estimate here is that it takes 250 Soviet troops to operate each of the 24 ground-to-air missile sites ringing the island. Thus, 6,000 men are believed to be assigned to these installations alone.

It is known that Cubans are being trained to operate these missile installations. But military specialists estimate that perhaps another year may be required before the installations can be turned over to the Premier Castro's forces.

Soviet specialists in Cuba are reported to be handling the tactical battlefield rockets known to United States military men as "frogs." These are weapons with a nuclear capacity and an over-the-horizon range of 15 to 25 miles. They resemble the United States Army's Honest John missile.

United States experts, however, have no positive information that nuclear tips for these weapons are actually stored in Cuba.

Reports from Cuba indicate that the general headquarters of the Soviet expeditionary force on the island is in the Palatine district, in southern Havana, occupying the installations of the former machine plant near the city's Sports Palace.

These reports have also pinpointed an area in Havana Province and areas in Camaguey and in the vicinity of Santa Clara, capital of Las Villas Province, as places where major Soviet sites are now under construction.

The reported site in Havana province lies between the San Antonio de Los Bancos air force base, which is southeast of Havana, and Wajay. It is described as the site of an underground missile installation.